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AWARENESS AND UTILIZATION OF COMPLEMENTARY AND ALTERNATIVE (CAM) THERAPIES IN MANAGING MENTALLY ILL PATIENTS AT DORAYI PSYCHIATRIC REHABILITATION CENTER, KANO, NIGERIA.

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ABSTRACT

The use of Complementary and Alternative Medicine (CAM) is growing among people in both developed and developing countries, including Nigeria, this study aims to explore the utilization of complementary and alternative therapy among mentally ill patients diagnosed at Dorayi Psychiatric Rehabilitation Center, Kano. The study's objectives are to determine what factors influence use, which CAM modalities are most frequently used, how CAM practices could be integrated with conventional mental health treatments, and how effective different CAM interventions are at managing symptoms related to various mental health conditions. This research used an explanatory mixed method design; 150 mentally ill patients at the Dorayi Psychiatric Rehabilitation Center in Kano were included in the quantitative study, and key informants, including psychiatrists and psychiatric nurses who treat mentally ill patients, were interviewed for the qualitative study. The findings of the study showed that 34.7% of the respondents are young adults and 56% have no formal education. The study further revealed that awareness of CAM therapies used by mentally ill patients at Dorayi Psychiatric Rehabilitation Center is poor since only 10% of the respondents were aware of it and utilization of CAM therapies was high as 87% of the respondents reported using some forms of CAM therapies. The study concludes that cultural and religious variables are the primary determinants of the high prevalence of CAM therapy utilization in the management of mentally ill patients. Herbal medication and prayer therapy—more especially, reciting and consuming the Qur'an (in the form of rubutu)—are the most often utilized among these treatments. To improve treatment outcomes, however, prayer therapy and recreational therapy must be incorporated into conventional mental health care to address the spiritual and emotional needs of mentally ill patients. The development of established guidelines, evidence-based research, partnerships with CAM practitioners, and training programs for psychiatric staff are the main goals of the strategies for incorporating complementary and alternative medicine into conventional. Therefore, the study recommends that during rehabilitation sessions, mentally ill patients and their relatives should receive health education about the various CAM therapy alternatives available for managing their illness in this with view of increasing the level of awareness and enhancing treatment outcomes.

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Keywords: Complementary and alternative medicine (CAM), mentally ill patients, Nigeria